

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is filed in response to the Office Action mailed May 22, 2007. By this paper each of the previously pending claims has been cancelled. New claims 17-32 have been added

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the office action, the Examiner rejected certain claims over various references. Prominent references included Nishihara, Futakuchi, Angell, and Novak, as well as other references referred to in the office action. Each of the art-based rejections was under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). A determination of obviousness is based on the factual inquiries of: (1) the scope and content of the prior art; (2) the differences between the claims and the prior art; (3) the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art; and (4) secondary considerations of nonobviousness. *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 17-18 (1966).

"The legal concept of *prima facie* obviousness is a procedural tool [that] ... allocates who has the burden of going forward with production of evidence in each step of the examination process." MPEP §2142. A *prima facie* case of obviousness is established only if the Examiner shows that (1) there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation, either in the reference itself or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference; (2) there is a reasonable expectation of success; and (3) the prior art teaches or suggests all of the claim elements. MPEP §2143.03. Specifically, "Obviousness cannot be established by combining the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, absent some teaching or suggestion supporting the combination." *ACS Hosp. Sys., Inc. v. Montefiore Hosp.*, 732 F.2d 1572, 1577 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

While each of the claims is newly submitted, the differences between the new claims and the references mentioned above are clear. Nishihara, for example related to the formation of a racket, not the preparation of a composite sheet material. The Nishihara racket is comprised of a fiber reinforced resin top portion and a helically wound layer. Abstract. There is no teaching of winding a composite sheet material using a heated resin which is solid or semi-solid at ambient temperature and then allowing the sheet material to cool to ambient. Thus, there is no teaching of various steps included within the claims as presented.

Futakuchi relates to a filament winding process. However, Futakuchi fails to teach the formation of a composite sheet material using a resin which is solid or semi-solid at ambient temperature. It fails to teach preparation of such a material from a heated resin and then allowing the resin to cool to ambient. It fails to teach removing such a composite sheet material from the mandrel. Thus, the claims set forth above are not obvious in view of Futakuchi alone or in combination.

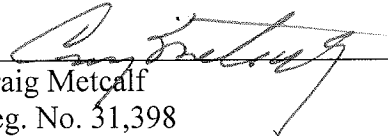
Angell relates to a hot-melt prepare tow process. However, Angell fails to teach the preparation of a composite sheet material. Rather Angell teaches preparation of a strand which is useful as a prepreg in forming composite structure. *Abstract*.

Novak also fails to teach the formation of a composite sheet material of the type claimed. In particular, Novak teaches the formation of a unwoven material. Col. 1, lines 8-22. This is in contrast to the claimed material. In addition, Novak fails to teach a composite sheet material formed by a heated resin which is solid or semi-solid at ambient.

Applicants submit that each of the currently pending claims is patentably distinguishable from the references applied for at least one or more of the reasons discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections expressed in the Office action and allowance of all pending claims. If there are any remaining issues or if the Examiner has any questions, Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached at the number listed below. Similarly, if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview may be productive in advancing prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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